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ASPECTS OF THE ATONEMENT

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ASPECTS OF THE ATONEMENT

THE ATONING SACRIFICE ILLUSTRATED FROM THE VARIOUS SACRIFICIAL TYPES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND FROM THE SUCCESSIVE AGES OF CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

BY THE

REV. LONSDALE RAGG

PREBENDARY AND VICE-CHANCELLOR OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL, AND SOMETIME WARDEN OF THE BISHOP'S HOSTEL, LINCOLN

WITH A PREFACE BY

EDWARD

BISHOP OF LINCOLN

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PREFACE
BY THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN

I SHOULD not myself have ventured to write anything on so mysterious a subject as the Atonement; but as I have been asked to write a few words of recommendation to these five Lectures by my friend the Rev. Canon Ragg, I very gladly do so, for two reasons. First, as the expression of my gratitude to Canon Ragg for the valuable service he has rendered to our Theological College by his life and teaching; and, secondly, because the treatment and general conclusion of these lectures appear to me to be on right lines.

The method of treatment is not to offer one complete theory that will embrace and make clear every side of the Truth, but rather to present different aspects of the Mystery, which, on converging lines, lead us towards the Truth.

This was the method adopted by the present learned Bishop of Gloucester, in his little but valuable book on the *Being of God.* His aim was, not so much to offer arguments or proofs as *considerations* or lines of thought on the cumulative or *ascensive* nature of which conviction seems mainly to rest.

A similar method of treatment of the doctrine is suggested to us by a former Bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Thompson, in his valuable essay on the "Death of Christ" in *Aids to Faith.* "What is there about

this teaching," he asks, "that has provoked in times past and present so much disputation? Not, I am persuaded, the hardness of the doctrine—for none of the theories put in its place is any easier—but its want of logical completeness. Sketched out for us in a few broad lines, it tempts our fancy to fill it in and lend it colour; and we do not always remember that the hands that attempt this are trying to make a Mystery into a Theory, an infinite truth into a finite one, and to reduce the great things of God into the narrow limits of our little field of view."

This appears to me to offer us a most salutary caution. It is Hooker's warning against making things "more plain than true." If we concentrate our powers of head and heart on the Mystery as it is revealed

to us, we may trust that the Holy Spirit will enable us to apprehend with sufficient fulness and clearness all that is necessary for our salvation—though, perhaps, we ought to add, "when Christ is needed, then, and not sooner, He will be found."

E. LINCOLN.

January 22, 1904,
OLD PALACE, LINCOLN.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THESE thoughts on the Atonement were originally delivered as addresses, or rather devotional lectures, to theological students in Holy Week. It is hoped that the lines of thought which they suggest may be found useful by a wider circle of readers as material for meditations, whether in Holy Week, during Lent, or on any Fridays throughout the year. The writer's aim being doctrinal rather than hortatory, it has not been felt necessary to work out in every case the practical application of each meditation.

A word or two may be appropriate about the general scope and tendency of the book.

Its purpose is primarily positive: to suggest the many-sidedness, the comprehensive and all-inclusive character, of the Atonement. But in taking this line, the writer inevitably found himself in sharp antagonism with much of modern thought. And so the lectures represent, secondarily, a protest against that narrowing tendency in the treatment of the doctrine of the Atonement which is observable in some branches of the Neo-Ritschlian school, and is characteristic of the modern "critical" spirit. One of the last products of M. Auguste Sabatier's pen, published posthumously in 1903,[1] is a good example of the tendency in question. It is a brilliant essay, and full of fruitful suggestions, of some of which the present writer

[1] *La Doctrine de l'Expiation et son Évolution Historique.* Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1903.

has gratefully availed himself. But it is condemned from the point of view of Catholic theology by the fact that it sets Scripture against Scripture, and deliberately rejects the line of thought represented by Leviticus, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the writings of St. John, in favour of that gathered from the Old Testament prophets, our Lord's teaching (arbitrarily limited) as given in the Synoptists, and the Epistles of St. Paul. St. Paul's own profound doctrine of the "two Adams" is also rejected as "incidental" and "rabbinistic."

M. Sabatier, in his lucid but rather imaginative historical sketch, alludes to the works of Thos. Arnold, F. D. Maurice, F. Robertson, and Macleod Campbell. It seems a tragic pity that he did not survive to see the far greater and more comprehensive

work of the lamented Robert Campbell Moberly.[1] Under that guidance he might have learned a wider outlook and a more reverent attitude towards revealed truth; and have realized that the meaning of the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ is not likely to be compassed or exhausted by the thought of a single mind or of a single age.

What is attempted here is to link certain prominent aspects of the Atonement with their types in Old Testament sacrifice on the one hand, and with the characteristic contributions of successive schools or periods of Christian thought on the other.

The associations suggested are in the

[1] *Atonement and Personality*, by R. C. Moberly. London: John Murray, 1901.

main obvious and traditional: where they are otherwise, it is hoped that they will not be found artificial or fantastic.

Besides what he has learned from the two recent books mentioned above, and from many earlier ones, the present writer acknowledges a real debt of gratitude to the Rev. W. O. Burrows, for his little book *The Mystery of the Cross;* to the Bishop of Worcester, and to the Principal of Cuddesdon, Canon J. O. Johnston, to whose oral teaching these chapters owe, probably, far more than the writer himself is able to detect. One further debt of gratitude has been incurred while the MS. was in proof, in the wise and mature criticisms of the Rev. Herbert Jeaffreson.

Yet even with such help these meditations remain entirely unworthy of their

great theme. They are sent forth with the prayer that, in spite of their obvious imperfections and superficialities, they may not fail to contribute something towards a more general realization of the comprehensiveness and many-sidedness of this great Mystery.

LONSDALE RAGG.

VILLINO BELVEDERE,
FIESOLE,
Whitsuntide, 1904.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE BY THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN vii

AUTHOR'S PREFACE xi

THE MYSTERY OF THE ATONEMENT 1

I. Introduction.
II. Morality of the Atonement.
III. Supernatural Character of the Atonement.
IV. New Testament Teaching on the Atonement.

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER 23

I. The Greek Fathers and the Atonement.
II. The Passover Sacrifice.
III. The Deliverance applied to individual life.

CHRIST OUR BURNT-OFFERING 45

I. Introduction.
II. *Cur Deus Homo?*
III. The Burnt-offering and its Antitype.
IV. The Message of the Burnt-offering to our Day.

PAGE

CHRIST OUR SIN-OFFERING 71

I. The Importance of Christ's Death.
II. The New Testament Doctrine of the Sin-offering.
III. Levitical Teaching and Modern Difficulties.
IV. The Passion reflects the Difficulty of Forgiveness.
V. Christ won for the World the Grace of Penitence.

CHRIST OUR PEACE-OFFERING 101

I. Importance of this Aspect of the Atonement.
II. The Cross and Forgiveness of Sins.
III. New Testament Teaching and Modern Difficulties.
IV. The Holy Spirit and the Life of Communion.
V. Conclusion.

INDEX OF SCRIPTURE REFERENCES 125

REFERENCES TO AUTHORS 127

THE MYSTERY OF THE ATONEMENT

Ω βάθος πλούτου καὶ σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως Θεοῦ· ὡς ἀνεξεραύνητα τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀνεξιχνίαστοι αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτοῦ. Rom. xi. 33.

I. *Introduction.* The doctrine, though central, must not be isolated or one-sidedly treated—Grave results of such treatment.

II. *Morality of the Atonement.* (*a*) Not the work of wrath, but of love; (*b*) not involving a "fictional substitution."

III. *Supernatural Character of the Atonement.* No mere historical incident involving a stirring appeal to the heart.

IV. *New Testament Teaching on the Atonement.* (*a*) Christ's death a Sacrifice; (*b*) three outstanding ideas — Rescue, Reconciliation, Righteousness. These correspond with types of Old Testament Sacrifice, and with different ages of Christian Thought. These to regulate the course of our meditation.

THE MYSTERY OF THE ATONEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The doctrine, though central, must not be isolated or one-sidedly treated—Grave results of such treatment.

THE Cross brings us face to face with the central Mystery of our Religion.

Central it is, but not, as some have taught, the sole essential doctrine : central, but only rightly understood in the light of all the rest. And so the recital of the work of redemption that finds place in all the ancient liturgies is comprehensive, ranging from the Incarnation to the Resurrection, Ascension, and Heavenly Priesthood of our Saviour.

Let us beware, then, of isolating too narrowly this topic, whether in our teaching

or in our learning; for it is such isolation that has led full often to one-sided and distorted doctrines, and has even alienated the hearts of honest men from the gospel which alone could offer them salvation.

Men think that the "Atonement" is out of date—a doctrine which might appeal, perhaps, to dark and superstitious ages, but one that has no message for to-day. It is bound up, they say, with an obsolete system of sacrifice, which the world has outgrown; it attributes to the Almighty a degree of injustice, in punishing the innocent for the guilty, which it would be insulting to attribute to a reasonable man; it offers empty husks to those who crave for food, putting us off with a legal fiction, a substitution by which some one else's punishment is to be counted mine, and I, remaining substantially what I am, am to be reckoned righteous because of Him.

"Let us be content, then," they would say, "to revere Christ as the noblest and sublimest of Martyrs. His death was just what Plato had predicted for an absolutely righteous man in the environment of a wicked world.[1] Let us take Christ," they would exclaim, "as our Pattern of self-sacrificing love. Is not Abelard's view of the Cross the most satisfactory—that it redeems man by evoking love from him in answer to that irresistible appeal of suffering love?"

There is something specious about this modern way of talking; and, indeed, there is a great truth underlying it—the truth that God's work of redemption must be at least *moral*, such as may not shock even the seared and blunted consciences of men, and that it must work a *moral transformation* in the souls of those whom it touches.

[1] Plato, *Republic*, bk. ii. 361 E, Ὁ δίκαιος μαστιγώσεται, στρεβλώσεται, δεδήσεται . . . τελευτῶν πάντα κακὰ παθὼν ἀνασχινδυλευθήσεται . . .

All this is profoundly true, and has been, perhaps, neglected or too little emphasized in some periods; but it is not by any means all the truth. It is but a tiny portion of that truth which is richly and variously imaged in the Bible—the truth that the Spirit-guided Church has sealed with her authority in accepting the canon of Scripture, and has embodied in her Liturgy and her sacramental system—the truth that sinful human nature needs and calls for.

"Repent, and be good like Christ!" Is it not a mockery? Do not those who are most touched by the spectacle of the Crucifixion, feel most acutely the impossibility of this? What about my present state? Can a clean thing come out of an unclean? What about my past? What force shall avail to undo it, to redeem me from its deadly grasp, to cleanse me from its accumulated guilt?

No; the modern rationalizing view,

which sees no mystery and no sacrifice in Calvary, is not only unscriptural and unhistorical; it hopelessly fails to solve the actual problem of our life—how to win that peace which is very life.

Let us lay down quite clearly from the first, two propositions, which will be found, we believe, in the sequel, to follow clearly from the teaching of the Bible about our Saviour's death.

The first is this, that the Atonement is not immoral; the second, that the Atonement is supernatural.

MORALITY OF THE ATONEMENT

(*a*) Not the work of wrath, but of love;
(*b*) not involving a "fictional substitution."

FIRST, *Christ's atoning work was not immoral.* It was not immoral on God's side or on man's. (1) When God would redeem fallen man, it is inconceivable that He should begin by a direct insult to man's best instincts—to the remnant of that Divine image in which He created him.

And, as a matter of fact, the popular notion of *an angry Father punishing an innocent Son*, which has embittered many an honest but ill-instructed soul against the very idea of an atonement, has no real ground in Scripture.

It was a willing sacrifice of self on the

part of the Divine Victim. His own recorded sayings, both in the Synoptic Gospels and in the Fourth, leave us no room for doubt on that point. To serve mankind by life and death was the very purpose of His coming into the world.[1] So we read in the Synoptists, while the general tenor of His life and teaching as recorded by St. John could not be better summed up than in the words of another Apostle: "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."[2]

He dies of His own will, His life lying absolutely within His own control, to give or to withhold: "No man," He says, "taketh it away from Me, but I lay it down of Myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."[3] "He was

[1] Mark x. 45; Matt. xx. 28. [2] 1 Tim. i. 15.
[3] John x. 18.

offered up because He Himself willed it (*oblatus est quia ipse voluit*)"—so runs the burden of one of the ancient Lesser Hours for Holy Week; and it is in perfect accord with Holy Scripture.

This offering is, on the one hand, the manifestation of perfect filial love to the Father, Whose work He is accomplishing: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to accomplish His work;"[1] and again, "I am come down from heaven not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."[2]

And this expression of the filial self-devotion of the Son of man weaves, as it were, a new strand into that infinite, eternal cord of love that binds Father and Son together: "Therefore (διὰ τοῦτο) doth the Father love Me, because I lay down My life."[3]

[1] John iv. 34; cf. viii. 29. [2] John vi. 38. [3] John x. 17.

On the other hand, it is the Son's offering of merciful love to us sinners: "The Son of God," ejaculates St. Paul, "who loved me, and gave Himself up for me."[1] Nay, it is the very demonstration to us of what love means: "Hereby know we love (*ἐν τούτῳ ἐγνώκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην*), because He laid down His life for us."[2]

And this love of the Son is, from another point of view, described as the love of God the Father, with whom He is essentially and eternally One.[3] It is "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."[4] God's love it is that lies behind the Sacrifice of Calvary: *Sic Deus dilexit mundum:* "God so loved the world . . ."[5] And Calvary, with all its terrors, represents primarily, not *judgment*, but *love:* 'For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world

[1] Gal. ii. 20. [2] 1 John iii. 16.
[3] John x. 30; cf. viii. 19; xii. 45; xiv. 7–11, etc.
[4] Rom. viii. 39; cf. viii. 37. [5] John iii. 16.

should be saved through Him."[1] It is a love that could not wait for a change in the sinful object, but must needs pour out its treasure on man in his rebellious state.[2] "Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins,"[3] a love that waits not for response, but which received in heart of faith, must inevitably evoke a response of transforming love to God and to man[4] by the operation of the Holy Spirit within us.[5]

And, lastly, this love of God—this Love which God Himself is—is no mere counterfeit, no weak and careless indulgence, but "a very flame of the Lord," whose "flashes are flashes of fire."[6] And, therefore, it must show itself stern in act and suffering; therefore the "wrath of God" appears in

[1] John iii. 17 and 1 John iv. 9. [2] Rom. v. 6–11.
[3] 1 John iv. 10. [4] 1 John iv. 11; v. 1, *sqq.*
[5] Rom. v. 5. [6] Cant. viii. 6.

tenderest contexts, side by side with His love;[1] therefore the supreme and unsurpassable exhibition of Love is found amid the horrors of Gethsemane and Calvary. But it is love from first to last, love and not wrath, that is the motive and background of the Atonement.

(2) Once more, the Atonement is not immoral where it touches *man*, in the way of a *fictional substitution* or *imputation*. Those who are scandalized at the thought of one man's work being imputed to another, forget who it was that suffered and conquered; and they forget also the Sacraments. They forget who it was. What *a* man—one of us—could not do, *representative Man* might surely accomplish; and when that comprehensive manhood is united with "the infinite worth of the Son of God," who shall limit the efficacy of the work? They forget

[1] Rom. v. 9.

also the Sacraments. Christ acted *for* us because He was going to act *in* us. It is so that the imputation ceases to be unreal, that the "justification" becomes no mere legal fiction, but a real justifying, a making righteous. "Our sinful bodies" are "made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood," just in proportion as we "evermore dwell in Him, and He in us." [1]

The Atonement, then, was no immoral transaction, such as has been sometimes pictured. But that is not all. There is a positive proposition also to be laid down, as against modern rationalizing tendencies.

[1] Prayer of Humble Access, in Book of Common Prayer.

SUPERNATURAL CHARACTER OF THE ATONEMENT

No mere historical incident involving a stirring appeal to the heart

SECONDLY, *the Atonement is supernatural.* We have already touched upon this topic indirectly; but a few words more may make our position clearer. The supernatural is, for various reasons, a stumbling-block to many minds to-day; and hence comes the tendency to regard the Crucifixion as a merely natural and inevitable episode in human history, and the Crucified as "Divine" only in the poetical sense in which we apply that epithet to the world's great heroes.

We are not here concerned with Atheism or professed Agnosticism. In their systems

the Mystery of the Atonement naturally has no place. But there is an unconscious Agnosticism in much professedly Christian thought to-day, which is not so much ignorant of as prone to ignore the direct working of God in the world's affairs.

To such minds the Cross is but a martyrdom, and its efficacy is confined to the power of an external appeal to man's better nature. All this it is, we admit; but this is not a half or a tenth part of the truth. And such a theory has to ignore, to twist, or to deny all, or nearly all, the references to Christ's death in the New Testament. It is based, as we have already seen, on an inadequate conception of the character of the Sufferer—*Man*, and not merely *a* man; and the manhood taken up into the Person of Him Who is "Very God."

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ON THE ATONEMENT

(*a*) Christ's death a Sacrifice ; (*b*) three outstanding ideas—Rescue, Reconciliation, Righteousness. These correspond with types of Old Testament Sacrifice, and with different ages of Christian Thought. These to regulate the course of our meditation.

WHEN we look at the New Testament, we find, first of all, that Christ's death is constantly spoken of in terms of *sacrifice*. This comes out most emphatically in the Epistle to the Hebrews,[1] the Gospel according to St. John, and the Epistles of St. Paul. But our Lord Himself, as represented in the Synoptic Gospels, most clearly connects together the thought of the Passover sacrifice and His own approaching death.[2] And after

[1] *Cf.* esp. ch. ix. 23–26 ; x. 12.

[2] Matt. xxvi. 26–28 ; Mark xiv. 22–24 ; Luke xxii. 17–20.

His resurrection, He spoke of His sufferings, with their triumphant sequel, as part of the fore-ordained and predicted mission of the Messiah.[1]

Beyond that first and all-pervading thought of sacrifice, we find[2] three groups of expressions which may roughly be represented by the three words, *Rescue*, *Reconciliation*, *Righteousness*. The groups are not quite free from overlapping—indeed, they rather grow out of one another—but, at any rate, the three ideas emerge as descriptive of three different aspects of Christ's Atoning Sacrifice in its relation to those whom He came to save.

(1) *The first group*—represented in the original by such words as λύτρον,[3] ἀπολύτρωσις,[4]

[1] Luke xxiv. 26, 27.

[2] As Dr. Moberly suggests, *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 334–336.

[3] Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45.

[4] Rom. iii. 24, and elsewhere.

and verbs of rescue in such passages as Col. i. 13; 2 Tim. ii. 26—speaks of our "ransom," "redemption," "deliverance" from death and corruption, and falls in line with the central idea of the *Passover sacrifice.*

(2) *The second group*—represented, *e.g.*, by ἱλασμός,[1] ἱλαστήριον,[2] καταλλάσσω,[3] δικαιόω, and its cognates δικαιοσύνη and δικαίωσις—tells of the alteration made in our relation to the Divine holiness, and speaks of access reopened that had been closed by sin. Its analogue in the Old Testament is to be found in the *sin-offering* and the *guilt-offering.*

(3) *The third group*—represented partly by a slightly different use of δικαιόω and its cognates, and by such words as ἁγιασμός,[4] εἰρήνη,[5] and ζωὴ[6] applied to Christ—views

[1] 1 John ii. 2; iv. 10. [2] Rom. iii. 25.
[3] Rom. v. 10, and elsewhere. [4] 1 Cor. i. 30.
[5] Eph. ii. 14. [6] 1 John i. 2; cf. Gal. ii. 20.

the atoning work as involving an essential transformation of our own selves. Christ is our Righteousness, our Sanctification, our Peace, our Life. These remind us, in their suggestion of a free and joyful service, of the *Burnt-offering* of the Old Testament; but still more, in their message of a mysteriously intimate communion, do they carry us back to the dominating idea of the Hebrew *Peace-offering*.

Passover, Burnt-offering, Sin-offering, Peace-offering: the characteristic spiritual idea underlying each of these sacrifices of the Old Covenant, seems to find a place in the rich and ample conception of the Mystery of the Cross as presented to us in the New Testament.[1] And so it may not be presumptuous if we venture to take

[1] The typical significance of the Levitical sacrifices will be found carefully worked out in Jukes' *Law of the Offerings* (Nisbet, 1875), and somewhat less elaborately in Willis' *Worship of the Old Covenant*.

these as our basis of classification, and to group our thoughts on the Atonement round these Old Testament ideas. And, doing so, we shall find that the leading feature of each one of the sacrifices mentioned above is reflected in some one age of Christian thought. Thus the age of the early Fathers, rich as it was in variety of thought and argument on the subject of Christ's atoning work, is characterized prevailingly by the idea of Rescue, Ransom, Redemption, and falls in line with the Passover sacrifice.

St. Anselm, who stands midway between the Patristic and the later Scholastic theology, represents above all the idea of the Burnt-offering—the sacrifice of homage and obedient service—Christ our Righteousness performing mankind's due to its Maker.

St. Thomas Aquinas and the later Schoolmen seem to emphasize more strongly

the thought of guilt and its punishment, corresponding to the characteristic note of the Sin-offering.

Finally, to the modern world, so impatient of any forensic idea of a "transaction" outside of us, so unwilling to see in the Atonement anything but a moral transformation within our nature, the Peace-offering has a special message. It tells of a real communication of the Divine Life, with all its potencies of purgation and transfiguration.

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER

Ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτιάν τοῦ κόσμου. John i. 29.

Τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός. 1 Cor. v. 7.

I. *The Greek Fathers and the Atonement.* First Period of Christian Thought—Its richness—The Apostolic Fathers—Athanasius—His theory of the Atonement as deliverance from the bondage of corruption—Incidental raising of the question, "To whom was the ransom paid?"

II. *The Passover Sacrifice.* Its association by Christ with His own death—Appropriateness of the type—Its comprehensive character.

III. *The Deliverance applied to individual life.* Three functions of the Paschal lamb—The Blood of Christ our deliverance from death, in Baptism and in Absolution—His deliverance of souls from the slavery of sin—His Flesh our sustenance.

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER

THE GREEK FATHERS AND THE ATONEMENT

First Period of Christian Thought—Its richness—The Apostolic Fathers — Athanasius — His theory of the Atonement as deliverance from the bondage of corruption—Incidental raising of the question, "To whom was the ransom paid?"

We are to consider in succession a few of the most important aspects of the Atonement, illustrating each by its analogue among the Old Testament sacrifices, and with each we are to take one of the great periods in which Christian thought has laboured to interpret to itself anew that inexhaustible Mystery.

The first period may be taken to include

roughly, the whole of the Ante-Nicene Age, from the Apostolic Fathers to St. Athanasius and his contemporaries. We shall not attempt to deal with it exhaustively. Our scope and purpose only permit us to treat it summarily in connexion with what seems to be its most prominent Old Testament analogue. For fuller treatment of the teaching of the Apostolic Fathers on this subject, we would refer the reader to Dr. Moberly's work,[1] where he will see for himself how scriptural is the doctrine alike of St. Clement and St. Ignatius, of the Epistle of Barnabas and the Epistle to Diognetus. Naïve and unsystematic as Scripture itself, their allusions are free from all taint of those artificial and immoral conceptions of the Atonement that have marred much later theology.

Similarly scriptural and comprehensive was

[1] Pages 326–332.

the language of the early Greek Fathers on the subject of the Atonement.

Their treatment of the subject is not, of course, confined to one aspect, but the thought of Rescue, Ransom, Deliverance, is perhaps the most prominent, and will justify us in taking, as our Old Testament parallel, the Passover sacrifice, the most comprehensive in its significance of all the sacrifices of the Old Testament.

Among the Greek Fathers of the first four centuries there was no clear definition or discussion of the topic of the Atonement by itself. It was treated, as by St. Athanasius, in connexion with the wider theme of the Incarnation. We will take Athanasius as representative of that age of Christian thought.[1]

[1] For a study of St. Athanasius's teaching on the subject, see Moberly, *op. cit.*, pp. 349–365; from the notes to which passage most of the following references are taken.

The Egyptian bondage from which man is redeemed by Christ is, in his view, the bondage of moral and physical corruption, the bondage of sin and death. These two are, to him, inseparable.[1] The "curse" attached to sin—the ban pronounced upon fallen man—is no arbitrary expression of Divine vengeance; rather, the divinely necessary consequence of sin. And there is no conceivable path to sinlessness for the sinner except the path of death.[2]

The ban of corruption is universal, and no creature can do anything to remove it.[3] A champion must be found from above the sphere of creaturely existence; life must be reinfused from the Primal Source of life;[4]

[1] Cf. *C. Ar.*, ii. 68, ap. Moberly, p. 353.
[2] *De Inc.*, ix.: Moberly, p. 355.
[3] *C. Ar.*, ii. 69: Moberly, 354.
[4] Αὐτοζωή, *De Inc.*, xx.; cf. *De Inc.*, vii.: Moberly, p. 351.

human nature must be united with the Divine.[1]

On the other hand, the curse must be removed, and removed by the way of death, by One who shall be truly and universally representative of the human race.[2]

Complex as are the conditions of the problem, St. Athanasius finds them all fulfilled in the redemptive work of the Incarnate Word. The Logos, Himself God and the very Image of the Father, who was God's Agent in creation, is to be the Agent also in the recreation of the race that was originally made rational (λογικόν) after His image.[3] He has, indeed, been ever present to His rational creatures all down the ages, immanent in man as in Nature,[4] "the Light

[1] *C. Ar.*, ii. 59; *De Inc.*, liv., quoted below, p. 32, note 3; and *C. Ar.*, ii. 70, ap. Moberly, p. 354.
[2] *De Inc.*, xx.: Moberly, p. 352.
[3] *De Inc.*, ii., iii.: Moberly, p. 349.
[4] *De Inc.*, viii.: Moberly, p. 349.

which lighteth every man.[1] But He who was, in this sense, ceaselessly "coming into the world," came in a new way in the fulness of time. He humbled Himself to take our flesh and work out our redemption; in that flesh He submitted to death, becoming "a curse" for us; and in His consequent exaltation—the exaltation of the manhood united to the Eternal Word—we also are exalted.[2] He has lifted us up above the sphere of death and corruption. We share His death; we share His resurrection to incorruptible life. He has done for us what no creature could do—He has made us "receptive of the Divine,"[3] has united us to God.

Complex as is the problem of redemption, equally complex is the Divine solution.

[1] John i. 9.

[2] *C. Ar.*, i. 41 : Moberly, pp. 356, 357.

[3] *C. Ar.*, ii. 59, Ὁ Λόγος σάρξ ἐγένετο ἵνα τὸν ἄνθρωπον δεκτικὸν Θεότητος ποιήσῃ.

And that solution, as St. Athanasius sees, lies along the line of Catholic Christology. Had not man been created in that "Image of God" which is the Word Himself, the Incarnation would have been inconceivable. Had He not taken our perishable flesh, the Logos could not have died.[1] Had not the flesh been united to the Very Life, the death would not have issued in that supreme triumph by which death, in its terrible sense, has been abolished once for all[2] for those who are in Christ. Were it not for our sacramental union — for His continual indwelling in us by His Spirit— we should lack the pledge and warrant of our incorruption.[3] By His abiding presence He infuses into corrupt humanity the vivifying principles of Very Life, which is

[1] *De Inc.*, ix.: Moberly, p. 355.

[2] Ὁ Λόγος . . . εὐθὺς . . . ἠφάνιζε τὸν θάνατον, *De Inc.*, ix.: Moberly, pp. 355, 356.

[3] Moberly, pp. 360, *sqq.*

Himself: "Our flesh itself is no longer a thing of earth, but made to be '*logos*' from henceforth."[1] "He became man," says St. Athanasius, in a phrase that recalls one of the most marvellous utterances in the New Testament[2]—"He became man in order that we might become God."[3]

The Atonement, as understood by St. Athanasius, is a Divine act, profound and many-sided. It involves the "self-identification of God with humanity," "the willing surrender of humanity in the Person of God to that dying without which there can be no passage for the sinner to sinlessness;" and, thirdly, the infusion into humanity of the "living Spirit of the Redeemer," issuing in the sanctification—nay, "deification"—of

[1] Οὐκέτι ὡς γηΐνης ἀλλὰ λοιπὸν λογωθείσης τῆς σαρκός, *C. Ar.*, iii. 33: Moberly, p. 358.

[2] 2 Pet. i. 4, Θειάς κοινωνοὶ φύσεως.

[3] Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἠνανθρώπησεν ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν, *De Inc.*, liv.

human character and life by the reproduction in us of His victorious sacrifice.[1]

In such a conception of the Atonement there would seem to be no room for the crude mistakes and cramped ideas that have since been associated with this topic. Yet reasonable and scriptural as was the treatment of this theme in the first four centuries, it could not be but that side-issues should be raised and illustrative phases pressed unduly here and there. One such misfortune originated for theology in the age with which we are now concerned, and close connexion with the Passover aspect of the Atonement. Incidentally a question was asked which proved in later centuries a fruitful cause of misunderstanding—

If Christ by His death ransomed and redeemed us—to whom did He pay the price?

[1] Summarized by Dr. Moberly, pp. 364, 365.

It is not a central point, still less (as we might suppose from M. Sabatier's *résumé*[1]) the dominating factor, in Irenæus's or Origen's theory of the Atonement. Yet the question was raised, and the answer was given—"to Satan."[2] Protests were heard, as from St. Gregory Nazianzene;[3] but the point was unfortunately elaborated by the great teachers of the succeeding centuries—St. Leo, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Great—and became an incubus upon the doctrine through the early Middle Ages, till St. Anselm arose to give it its *coup-de-grâce*. Thus the pressing of a metaphor derived from the Gospels resulted in mythological tales of a Divine bargain with the arch-tyrant, and a Divine deception of the arch-deceiver.

For us the notion has but an antiquarian

[1] *Expiation*, pp. 48, *sqq.*
[2] Iren., *Hær.*, v. 1. 1; Orig. *in Matt.* xx. 28.
[3] Greg. Naz., *Orat.* xlii. ap. Sabatier, p. 51.

interest. It finds no counterpart in the historical basis of the Passover. Israel was ransomed of old, redeemed from the "iron furnace" of Egyptian bondage; but no ransom was paid to the tyrant, no payment except what he received in the awful strokes of Divine judgment.

THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE

Its association by Christ with His own death—Appropriateness of the type—Its comprehensive character.

We scarcely need to remind ourselves how closely the Passover sacrifice is connected by our Lord with His own death. The occasion and the words of His institution of the Holy Eucharist [1] make St. Paul's description of the Atonement in some ways the most appropriate of all—"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." [2]

The Passover is also appropriately typical in virtue of the comprehensive nature of its associations. Christ's atoning work was,

[1] Matt. xxvi. 26, and parallels.
[2] 1 Cor. v. 7 (A.V.).

as we have seen, as many-sided as the ruin wrought in our nature by sin ; and this comprehensiveness is reflected in the theology of St. Athanasius. Similarly many-sided and comprehensive were the associations connected with the Passover. This sacrificial feast was to the Hebrews the perpetual memorial[1] of the great deliverance—that redemption from bondage which was at the same time, in a sense, the birthday of the Hebrew nation and Church. It lay to a certain extent outside the regular Levitical scheme of sacrifices, and embodied features characteristic of each. The entire consumption of the victim[2] recalls the prominent note of the Burnt-offering ; the ceremonial use of the blood[3] reminds us of the Sin-offering, in which that element was especially

[1] Exod. xiii. 11–16 ; xii. 14, 27, 42.
[2] Exod. xii. 10.
[3] Exod. xii. 7, 13.

significant; the feast upon the sacrifice[1] has its parallel in the characteristic feature of the various types of Peace-offering.

[1] Exod. xii. 8, 14, etc.

THE DELIVERANCE APPLIED TO INDIVIDUAL LIFE

Three functions of the Paschal lamb—The Blood of Christ our deliverance from death, in Baptism and in Absolution—His deliverance of souls from the slavery of sin—His Flesh our sustenance.

THREE out of the countless thoughts suggested by the Paschal lamb may help us to realize how this aspect of the Atonement touches our own life.

That lamb, while its sprinkled blood was warrant of immunity from the brand of the Angel of Death,[1] stood to all generations as the token of an actual deliverance from bondage, and its flesh, eaten with girt loins and shod feet and staff in hand,[2] supplied the *viaticum* for the departing hosts—the

[1] Exod. xii. 12, 13, 23, 27. [2] Exod. xii. 11.

food in the strength of which they set out for the promised land.

Even so for us is Christ first of all the Lamb whose Blood delivers from death. Every baptized infant, brought by regeneration and incorporation within the range of the Atoning Blood, is released from the hereditary doom that belongs to each child of Adam—the "curse" of corruption and death. Not that death in the *physical* sense is abolished, but—

> ". . . henceforth is death
> But the gate of life immortal."

But sin after Baptism is, alas! only too possible, and the regenerate may fall away and pass again under the shadow of death. Even for such, when brought to repentance by the grace of the Holy Spirit of Christ, there is stored up in the Church's treasury the blood of sprinkling in the cleansing rite of Absolution.

The characteristic idea, however, on which we would dwell just now is that of the deliverance—the redemption from the actual slavery of sin. No need to illustrate this hideous thraldom—the galling tyranny of evil indulged in till we are "tied and bound" with its chain. Have you ever known and loved one who is a slave to drink? Have you seen him struggle and struggle desperately to get the mastery, only to fall again? His earthly prospects, his home affections, his own ideals, his eternal future, all call him one way, and he is powerless to follow! Is not this all too common spectacle—one among many types of slavery—enough to convince us that nothing can avail except the supernatural; nothing but a real, practical, cleansing, strengthening union of frail human nature with the Divine? Can anything suffice for such a one, but that his flesh should be made "no longer a

thing of earth;" that he should become in Christ "a new creature;"[1] the disfigured image of the Divine in him restored by the Logos, the very Image of the Father?

All of us know something of the bondage of evil habits which we hate and despise, yet do not seem able to shake off, with all our good resolutions and repeated efforts. "Whosoever committeth sin," says He who knew what was in man,[2] "is the *slave* of sin."[3]

We are in the strait which St. Paul so eloquently describes in his Epistle to the Romans.[4] "Who shall deliver us out of the body of this death?" But we can exclaim with him, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."[5] He who knows what is in man is also almighty to help, all-loving to redeem. "I have surely seen the affliction of My

[1] 2 Cor. v. 17. [2] John ii. 25.
[3] Δοῦλος τῆς ἁμαρτίας, John viii. 34. [4] Rom. vii. 24.
[5] 1 Cor. xv. 57.

people," which are in bondage, ". . . and I am come down to deliver them."[1] His name is Jesus, because He "shall save His people from their sins."[2] And yet it is more than pardon, more than mere deliverance, that we need—freedom, not merely passive but active, such freedom as the Son alone can give;[3] strength to enable us to go forward through the long desert-journey of temptation and humiliation to the Mount of God. And it is the Paschal Lamb, as our *viaticum*, who supplies us with that strength, gives us power and cleansing all in one. It is just because He permits us to feed on Him and to take of His pure life into ourselves, that we may hope to "keep the feast, not with the old leaven . . . of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."[4]

[1] Exod. iii. 7, 8.
[2] Matt. i. 21.
[3] John viii. 36.
[4] 1 Cor. v. 8.

Our *viaticum*—yes, not for the start alone, but for all the long pilgrimage He supplies unfailing sustenance. It is for Himself we ask—it is Himself we receive—when we pray at the Altar, "Give us . . . our daily bread"—

> "Da oggi a noi la cotidiana manna
> Senza la qual, per questo aspro diserto,
> A retro va chi più di gir s'affanna."[1]

[1] Dante, *Purg.*, xi. 13–15.

CHRIST OUR BURNT-OFFERING

Διὰ τῆς ὑπακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς δίκαιοι κατασταθήσονται οἱ πολλοί.
Rom. v. 19.

I. *Introduction.* Sketch of the Argument: The Burnt-offering, though logically posterior to the Sin-offering, is historically prior to it, both in pagan and Hebrew religion, and in the Christian theology of the Atonement.

II. *Cur Deus Homo?* Atmosphere of feudal chivalry —Debt of service to the Suzerain—Christ, as God Incarnate, is in a position to pay on man's behalf, (1) the accumulated debt of service owed by the Race since the Fall; (2) a surplus *pro contumelia*—Value of St. Anselm's work.

III. *The Burnt-offering and its Antitype.* Description of the Levitical Burnt-offering—Its value and its failure—Popular misconception as to the attitude

of the Prophets towards sacrifice—In the Old Testament only the shadow, the substance in the New—Christ's sacrifice satisfies where Levitical sacrifices fail; *e.g.* in identification of victim with offerer, and in spontaneity.

IV. *The Message of the Burnt-offering to our Day.* The Spirit of discipline inculcated by the obedience of the Passion—Its marks: (1) it is painful and costly; (2) it shows attention to detail; (3) it endures to the end.

CHRIST OUR BURNT-OFFERING.

INTRODUCTION

Sketch of the Argument: The Burnt-offering, though logically posterior to the Sin-offering, is historically prior to it, both in pagan and Hebrew religion, and in the Christian theology of the Atonement.

THE exceeding mystery of our Lord's atoning sacrifice is deeper than any one mind or any one age can fathom; its aspects are more, and more various, than any one phase of Christian thought can fully reflect. But each age and each saintly mind has its contribution to offer. Each interprets the great mystery in the way that appeals most forcibly to himself and his contemporaries, and in doing so adds his *quota* to the great treasury of Christian thought. Thus, *St.*

Athanasius, steeped in the lore of Christian Alexandria, and writing to those to whom the doctrine of the "Logos," the Divine Word, made a special appeal, groups his thoughts about the Atonement round that idea. So again *St. Anselm*, seven centuries later, casts his theory into the form suggested by *Teutonic feudalism*. Sin is for him the unpaid *debt of homage or service* due to the supreme Lord of the universe, and the Atonement the deliverance from that obligation.

Now, this thought of *homage due to God* is the underlying thought of the familiar *Burnt-offering* of the Old Testament.

Logically, perhaps, we ought to have taken the *Sin-offering* first, because until the avenue of approach to God, which sin has blocked, be opened up again, neither self-offering nor communion are really possible. Yet the order we are taking seems to be the historical one both in the Old Testament

and in Church history. In patriarchal times we hear nothing of the Sin-offering;[1] the thought of *homage* and service is, we are now told, probably the primary idea of sacrifice, as it might well have been in the golden days of Eden.

It was not till later that the Law was given, with one of its chief purposes to develop the sense of sin;[2] and brought the idea of expiation into prominence.

So, too, in Church history. Though the idea of the Sin-offering could never be wholly absent from the Church's conception of the Atonement, seeing how essential a place it holds in the Epistle to the Romans, yet the thought of expiation and satisfaction as a dominant thought comes later than that of

[1] In the "patriarchal background" of the Book of Job, which partly, perhaps, reflects the ideas of a later age, the Burnt-offering is *employed* as a Sin-offering (see Job i. 5; xlii. 8).

[2] Rom. vii. 13.

the obligation of obedience. The *Burnt-offering*, though not on the surface, at any rate, of St. Anselm's reasoning, falls into line with his exposition of the conditions of redemption, just as the *Sin-* or *Guilt-offering* is parallel to some extent with the prevailing idea of penal satisfaction which the later Schoolmen, like St. Thomas Aquinas, drew from Roman law.

CUR DEUS HOMO?

Atmosphere of feudal chivalry—Debt of service to the Suzerain—Christ, as God Incarnate, is in a position to pay on man's behalf, (1) the accumulated debt of service owed by the Race since the Fall; (2) a surplus *pro contumelia*—Value of St. Anselm's work.

In St. Anselm, also, the idea of penal satisfaction comes in, but rather as the rejected alternative. Man owes to God, the Universal Suzerain, the submission of his created will in service of perfect obedience. Nothing else will satisfy the feudal rights of the Creator; nothing else will satisfy Heaven's code of chivalry. This is the honour due to God from His rational creatures, angels and men, the sole and only honour which God demands of us—a perfectly surrendered will. "Whoso withholds this, robs

the King of kings of His due—and this is sin."[1] Man, since the Fall, has thus robbed God, and the debt of unpaid service has gone on accumulating down the ages. There are only two alternatives, according to the laws of honour. Man must restore in full that of which he has robbed his Lord—in full, and with a surplus by reason of the *outrage* (*pro contumelia*); or he must suffer the penalty inflicted to vindicate his Sovereign's honour — the pains of eternal death. *Cur Deus Homo?* Why did God become man? Because the God-Man alone could pay this debt as man's Representative, and so deliver mankind from their hopeless plight. Hopeless, indeed; for how can any of us pay his own debt—his own "ten thousand talents"?[2] If I serve God with all

[1] *Cur Deus Homo*, i. 11: "Hoc est debitum quod debet angelus et homo Deo, quod solvendo nullus peccat . . . hic est solus et totus honor quem debemus Deo," etc.

[2] Matt. xviii. 24.

my might unswervingly from this moment, all my days — I have still but done that which I was bound to do in respect of this remaining portion of my life. The sinful past is still unredeemed, unredeemable—I cannot hope to pay my own debt, the debt of absolute obedience that has been owed ever since I first drew breath. How, then, can I offer a surplus for the outrage? and how can I ever contribute any least mite towards paying off the accumulated obligation of humanity?

Christ, perfect God and perfect Man, says St. Anselm, paid all His debt as man to the Creator. His was a life of absolute obedience, of unreserved homage and service. And He offered up—He, the Second Adam, the Representative Man—offered up that sacrifice of perfect obedience on behalf of all mankind. We became once more obedient in Him. But He did more. He did what

none of us conceivably could do: He rendered a homage which He did not owe—a surplus, as it were, of satisfaction, to make good the past, to atone for the *outrage* of sin. He owed indeed, as man, a life of perfect obedience, and He paid it to the full; but, sinless as He was, He owed not the wages of sin.[1] It is by His *obedience "unto death"*[2]—by the voluntary death of the Sinless One—that He brings to a successful issue His loving purpose of salvation; wins a double triumph at once for the justice and the mercy of God.[3]

Something of this kind is the argument of St. Anselm—far more close and subtle, far more nobly expressed; but having as its central and essential thought that of the Sovereign's claim to homage and obedience; and clothed, as I have tried to clothe it, in

[1] *Cur Deus Homo*, ii. 11. [2] Phil. ii. 8.
[3] *Cur Deus Homo*, ii. 19, 20.

the garb of feudalism and chivalry. Its clothing we may lay aside, but there remains a most important and suggestive aspect of sin and of Atonement.

Sin, says St. John, is lawlessness — disobedience. The two are convertible terms —ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία. "Christ was manifested," says the same writer, "to take away sins."[1]

Well may we think of Him as the *perfect whole Burnt-offering* of humanity. In Him at last humanity was found offering that which it had never been able to offer since the Fall—a perfect self-oblation, an utterly surrendered will, a whole-hearted loyalty of service.

[1] 1 John iii. 4, 5.

THE BURNT-OFFERING AND ITS ANTITYPE

Description of the Levitical Burnt-offering—Its value and its failure—Popular misconception as to the attitude of the Prophets towards sacrifice—In the Old Testament only the shadow, the substance in the New—Christ's sacrifice satisfies where Levitical sacrifices fail; *e.g.* in identification of victim with offerer, and in spontaneity.

A VERY real antitype this, of the *'olah* of the Levitical Law,[1] and of the pre-Levitical religion of the Patriarchs. The gift that symbolized the absolute submission, the unreserved homage of the offerer: utterly consumed upon the altar by the holy fire, floating up heavenwards in ethereal vapour, an offering of a sweet savour to the Supreme Lord of the Universe. The pious Israelite brought of his best—no poor or blemished

[1] See esp. Lev. i. 3, *sqq.*, and vi. 8, *sqq.*

offering; he brought a life, warm and throbbing—a life, perchance, that he had reared upon his own homestead. And he identified himself so far as might be with that life, by solemn laying-on of hands. And if he were sincere, his heart went up with the "*sursum corda*" of the altar-smoke, in reverent self-oblation to the Possessor and Giver of all. A right instinct this, in primitive man—the instinct of homage to the Unseen. And whatever views we may hold about a definite "Primitive Revelation," we cannot fail to see here the work of the Divine Creator-Logos, the "Light which lighteth every man."[1] But the old sacrifices, God's own provision though they were for the education of mankind, were after all a failure in themselves.

Do not suppose, as is the fashion nowadays, that the great Prophets of Israel

[1] John i. 9.

ranged themselves against sacrifice and ceremonial as such. All their strongest utterances may surely be interpreted in a sense less subversive of the unity of Scripture. What they denounced was reliance on the *outward* as a substitute for the *inward:* the form of a sacrificial worship without the heart of it—a surrendered will. "To obey is better than sacrifice,"[1] not because the two are opposed or contradictory, but because obedience—the homage of the will—is the very soul of sacrifice itself. "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice;"[2] not that the divinely ordained rites are themselves distasteful to God, but rather that the "treading of His courts"[3] becomes a mockery and an insult if the offering is not the outflow of a loyal and loving heart. To "do justly, and to love mercy, and to

[1] 1 Sam. xv. 22. [2] Hos. vi. 6; Matt. ix. 13, etc. [3] Isa. i. 12.

walk humbly with thy God,"[1]—these are what God required then, as He requires now, of His people; but these found their natural climax of expression in the symbolic acts of homage and worship which God Himself had ordained.

Yet, when all is said, there remains a character of unsatisfactoriness, of imperfection, of a "make-shift" about the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. We know why: because men had as yet the shadow, not the substance; the promise, not the fulfilment. And among the reasons why it was so unsatisfactory were the want of spontaneity about the victim and the want of real identity between the victim and the offerer. As regards the latter point we need only remind ourselves how absolutely our Saviour's Burnt-offering supplies the want. Christ was Himself Priest and Victim and

[1] Micah vi. 8.

Offerer. He offers for humanity because humanity is summed up in Him. In Him our humanity is found presenting to the Father a "reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice," of absolute homage and self-surrender. As in Adam all rebelled, even so in Christ did all render loyal service; "through the obedience of the One" were "the many made righteous."[1] And what He did for all, He wills to do in each by His Holy Spirit, and by the sacramental union of each member with Himself.

But it is the *spontaneity* of the offering on which we would chiefly dwell.

It is no unconscious, unwilling victim that is led to the altar—it is the Lamb of Isa. liii.; "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;"[2] "Who loved me, and gave Himself up for me."[3]

Even in pagan history we are conscious

[1] Rom. v. 19. [2] John i. 29. [3] Gal. ii. 20.

of a rise in the scale of sacrifice in proportion to the voluntariness in the victim. When Livy tells us that in time of disaster captive Gauls were sacrificed in the forum, we feel nothing but horror and disgust. But when we read, as boys, of the self-devotion of Marcus Curtius leaping, a living self-oblation, into the chasm; when we read Euripides' pathetic description of the voluntary self-offering of Iphigenia to remove the curse from the Achaian hosts, —our hearts were thrilled and our minds uplifted.

But here, in Christ's "obedience unto death," is the climax of willingness. A life lived all through in conscious and unswerving submission to the Father's will—His very "meat" to do it[1]—an obedience that meant the voluntary laying down of the one human life over which death had no

[1] John iv. 34.

sort of claim. Oh, what a dignity it sheds back upon the ritual of the burnt-offering, to think it was God's own appointed picture of the sublime obedience of the Christ!

No more need now of the picture, for the reality is come; the former glory is done away by reason of "the glory that excelleth."

"Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not,
But a body didst Thou prepare for Me;
In whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin, Thou hadst no pleasure:
Then said I, Lo I am come,
(In the roll of the book it is written of Me)
To do Thy will, O God."[1]

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[1] Heb. x. 5, *sqq*. Cf. Ps. xl. 6–8.

THE MESSAGE OF THE BURNT-OFFERING TO OUR DAY

The Spirit of discipline inculcated by the obedience of the Passion—Its marks: (1) it is painful and costly; (2) it shows attention to detail; (3) it endures to the end.

As we repeat the great hundred and nineteenth Psalm hour by hour,[1] shall we not pray that something of its spirit may abide in us? For it is the very spirit of the burnt-offering—the spirit of submission, homage, obedience.

The burnt-offering has a special message to our day, when reverence and obedience are so little practised. Sometimes they are slighted only in appearance, on the principle

[1] In the "Lesser Hour" Offices.

that we ought to "obey God rather than men;"[1] but we must beware lest we deceive ourselves, and let an antinomian spirit of wilfulness spread into this or that department of our life.

We might well take the obedience of the Passion as a subject for meditation and for imitation. In that obedience there are three unmistakable marks: (1) It was painful[2] and costly: ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν, "He learned obedience by the things which He suffered." (2) It showed itself, not in grand resolutions, but in a careful attention to detail. (3) It endured to the end, till He could say His Τετέλεσται, "It is finished!"

(1) *It was painful and costly.* When we are tempted to think that the obedience of the perfect Man was a mere matter of course —it behoves to kneel with Him in the

[1] Acts v. 29. [2] Heb. v. 8.

moonlight among the olives of Gethsemane.

"By Thine agony and bloody sweat, good Lord, deliver us" from forgetfulness of the stern truth that obedience must be painful!

And all the torture of Good Friday was to follow! But the battle of obedience had been won.

It is nothing to obey when the sun shines and all is smooth and pleasant. Do we know what it is to render glad and cheerful homage in hours of darkness? Is our obedience marked with the cross? It is when our own comfort is interfered with, our own will thwarted, that loyalty begins to be really tested. Thank God, then, when He permits you to learn as your Master learned, obedience through suffering.

(2) *It exhibited attention to detail.* There are few things more striking—where all is

so wonderful—than this feature of our Lord's Passion. How in the midst of that bewildering, overwhelming sea of horrors, He is ever calmly mindful of the details of His mission—to the very quoting of a Messianic Psalm.[1] How He is ever calmly alert with sympathy for others—the sleeping disciples, Malchus, St. Peter the denier, Pilate, the Roman soldiers, the robber, His own blessed Mother and the beloved disciple. How He is proof against every species of insult and mockery and false accusation, yet quick to respond to the High Priest's solemn adjuration,[2] sealing thereby His own death-warrant. We might have thought that a single act of self-oblation on the Thursday night would have been sufficient; but we find Him constantly on the watch, from first to last, setting an example of His own solemn precept, "Watch and pray."[3]

[1] See John xix. 28. [2] Matt. xxvi. 63, 64.
[3] Matt. xxvi. 41.

And for us, how easy it would be if we could offer ourselves once for all and have done with it! Perhaps some people have thought to do so in devoting themselves to the monastic life. But if so, they have soon found out their mistake. The struggle, the demand, does not cease—it only assumes a different shape. "Take up his cross *daily*."[1] A daily, hourly self-oblation in a careful and conscientious strictness of obedience—that is the ideal, that is the Burnt Sacrifice which our Holy Redeemer offered; and it should be ours.

(3) *It endured to the end.* They only realize the full force of temptation who have stood out manfully, not only for a time, but all through from the first assault to the last, when the enemy brings as it were his deadliest line—his "Old Guard"—to the attack.

[1] Luke ix. 23.

None save He who was "in all points tempted, yet without sin,"[1] could feel the full agony of endurance involved in resistance. But He endured to the end; and we can do so in His strength. From first to last He was "about His Father's business,"[2] doing the will of Him that sent Him till He had finished His work,[3] till with His latest breath He could utter the cry of victory, "It is finished!"[4]

Our Lord's Sacrifice is far more than an example; but it *is* an example, as St. Peter tells us—that we "should follow His steps."[5] It is more, because from it we may draw enabling power to follow—to keep, in fact, with growing conscientiousness, the vow of obedience which we made to Him when He first joined us to Himself at Baptism; the continuous act of self-surrender

[1] Heb. iv. 15. [2] Luke ii. 49 (marg.).
[3] John iv. 34. [4] John xix. 30.
[5] 1 Pet. ii. 21.

to the Father which we repeat at every Eucharist, when He comes to give Himself anew to us: "Here we offer . . . unto Thee ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee."

CHRIST OUR SIN-OFFERING

Ὃς τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν αὐτὸς ἀνήνεγκεν ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

I. *The Importance of Christ's Death.* *Résumé* of the argument: Christ's death not merely incidental—This recognized by the Schoolmen (though in too juridical a fashion)—Shown by Scripture and by His own attitude towards it—It is a condition of the fruitfulness of His life, and a Sacrifice for which He had been marked out from the first—This aspect summed up in the Liturgy.

II. *The New Testament Doctrine of the Sin-offering.* Emphasis of Scripture on Christ's sin-bearing—Meaning of *Reconciliation* in this context—Meaning of *Propitiation.*

III. *Levitical Teaching and Modern Difficulties.* Modern misunderstanding of the doctrine due largely to failure to appreciate the Old Testament—Even crudest ideas of sacrifice have much to teach,

Levitical sacrifices vastly more—Profound teaching of Leviticus about sin and holiness reflected dimly in pagan rites all over the world.

IV. *The Passion reflects the Difficulty of Forgiveness.* Why could not God do away sin with a mere *fiat?*—The depths of the Passion: Gethsemane and the cry from the Cross—Mistaken interpretations.

V. *Christ won for the World the Grace of Penitence.* The Cross supplies (1) the *motive* of penitence, in fear and love; (2) the *grace* of penitence, by our sacramental union with the Crucified.

CHRIST OUR SIN-OFFERING

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST'S DEATH

Résumé of the argument: Christ's death not merely incidental—This recognized by the Schoolmen (though in too juridical a fashion)—Shown by Scripture and by His own attitude towards it—It is a condition of the fruitfulness of His life, and a Sacrifice for which He had been marked out from the first—This aspect summed up in the Liturgy.

In the Cross we have seen consummated the perfect offering of human obedience. "He became obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the Cross."[1] That was the issue that perfect loyalty to truth and right must take in an evil world, so Plato warned us.[2] From that point of view, the Crucifixion itself was almost incidental, and it was the

[1] Phil. ii. 8. [2] See p. 5.

voluntary character of the death rather than the death itself that was important. "*Non mors*," says St. Bernard, "*sed voluntas placuit sponte morientis.*" [1]

But the death itself had a value all its own, if we may trust the impression left on us by Old Testament and New Testament alike.

And its value and purpose is not sufficiently explained by St. Anselm's doctrine of "surplus for the outrage." A later generation, realizing this, was tempted, perhaps, to dwell too exclusively on the death, and thus to render itself responsible for a false emphasis, and it may be something worse.

We have now reached the age of the Scholastics proper; and the background is no longer, as with Anselm, that of Teutonic chivalry, with its notion of "compensation for a crime by the offering of an equivalent

[1] *De Erroribus Abœlardi*, viii.

for the damage committed," but rather that of Roman law — "satisfaction by legal punishment merited and undergone." [1]

St. Thomas, indeed, guards against a false idea of substitutionary punishment, by emphasizing the reality of our incorporation in the suffering Christ as His members.[2] But strong as are the expressions in Scripture about the sin-bearing of the Saviour, we cannot but feel that the theologians of that age went beyond scriptural warrant in so boldly applying the word *punishment* to the Atonement.

There is a quaint and naïve argument at the end of the second book of Dante's "De Monarchia," [3] which shows how this idea of the Atonement as punishment, in the strictest

[1] Sabatier, p. 59.

[2] *Summa*, part iii. q. 48, art. 2, quoted below, p. 116, note.

[3] Dr. Moore's edition, pp. 362, 363: "*Punitio* is pain inflicted by one who possesses *jurisdictio puniendi*, *i.e.* by a *judex ordinarius* . . . si ergo sub ordinario judice Christus passus non fuisset, illa pœna punitio non fuisset: et judex

juridical sense, was accepted as a matter of course in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Dante argues from it as from an axiom, to prove the Divine right of the Roman Empire to rule the whole world.

Christ, he says, testified to this "at each end of His earthly warfare:" first by being born amid the associations of Augustus' world-wide census; and secondly by suffering under Pontius Pilate, the representative of Tiberius. For unless Pilate's master had lawful jurisdiction over all the human race, the punishment of Christ for all mankind would not be valid. Therefore, *si Romanum imperium de jure non fuit, peccatum Adæ in Christo non fuit punitum.*

We can see the absurdity and the peril of such a conception: but we must not be led

ordinarius esse non poterat, nisi supra totum humanum genus jurisdictionem habens, quum totum humanum genus in illa carne Christi portantis dolores nostros . . . puniretur."

on that account to minimize the stress which Scripture lays upon our Lord's death, or rather the offering up of His life.

There is something unique, as has been observed, about our Lord's own attitude towards His death. He looks forward to it, He predicts it, not without human shrinking, human apprehension, yet with a certain eagerness of anticipation, as one who has in sight the supreme moment of his mission: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"[1] He looks forward to it as—not an end, but a beginning; not the anti-climax, but, as it were, the seal upon His work, that shall make it valid, efficacious, fruitful. "The death on the Cross is absolutely cardinal."[2] "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit."[3]

[1] Luke xii. 50. [2] Moberly, p. 332. [3] John xii. 24

Again, as we have seen, He is conscious that it is within His own control. "No one taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."[1]

The shadow of the cross had been upon Him from His babyhood. It lies across Simeon's words to the Blessed Virgin, "Yea, and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul."[2]

He had been marked off for sacrificial death from the very opening of His ministry in the Baptist's "*Ecce Agnus Dei!*"[3]

More definitely still He had spoken of being lifted up and drawing all men to Himself.[4] And on that sacred Thursday night He speaks of His Body as "given for" His followers, His Blood as "shed for many" "unto remission of sins," and He calls it

[1] John x. 18.
[2] Luke ii. 35.
[3] John i. 36.
[4] John xii. 32.

His "Blood of the Covenant," or of the "New Covenant."[1] Here we are in the circle of thoughts that we most habitually connect with sacrifice. It is, as it were, the inmost sanctuary of the Passion. *Christ our Sin-offering.* Christ, who, in the comprehensive words of our Liturgy,[2] "by His one oblation of Himself once offered, made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world."

[1] Mark xiv. 24; Matt. xxvi. 28. [2] Consecration Prayer.

THE NEW TESTAMENT DOCTRINE OF THE SIN-OFFERING

Emphasis of Scripture on Christ's sin-bearing—Meaning of *Reconciliation* in this context—Meaning of *Propitiation.*

THE words just quoted are very familiar to us, and hallowed by the most sacred associations. But to many of our contemporaries they convey no meaning at all.

It is here, in this aspect of expiation, propitiation, reconciliation, that modern thought has least sympathy with the doctrine of the Atonement, and, we must add, with the plain teaching of Scripture about the Self-offering of Christ.

We found, you will remember, in the New Testament three groups of metaphors

descriptive of Christ's work for us, corresponding to the three words—Rescue, Reconciliation, Righteousness. It is with the second of these groups that we are now concerned.[1]

These phrases, especially *Propitiation*[2] and *Reconciliation*,[3] "express," as has been said, "more or less under earthly metaphor, the alteration made in man's condition in respect of his relation to the eternal and immovable holiness of God."[4] And they are backed by a number of strong sacrificial expressions which point unmistakably to the Sin-offering. Thus in His death He is spoken of as *suffering*[5] for sins, *bearing sins*,[6]

[1] For what follows, cf. Moberly, pp. 334, 335, and Bishop Westcott's note in 1 John, pp. 85–87 on ἱλασμός.

[2] Ἱλασμός, 1 John ii. 2 ; ἱλαστήριον, Rom. iii. 25 ; cf. ἱλάσκεσθαι, Heb. ii. 17.

[3] Καταλλαγή, 2 Cor. v. 18–20, and often.

[4] Moberly, pp. 334, 335.

[5] 1 Pet. iii. 18. [6] 1 Pet. ii. 24 ; Heb. ix. 28.

made to be sin,[1] and even "*made a curse*"[2] for us.

We may dwell for a moment on one of these phrases—Propitiation, only pausing to remind ourselves, with respect to the other—Reconciliation—that the New Testament does not speak of God being "reconciled to us," but of our being reconciled to God.[3] In the great central passage, in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians,[4] St. Paul expounds the "ministry of reconciliation" as based on the fact that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." If God could cease to "reckon" to mankind their

[1] 2 Cor. v. 21. [2] Gal. iii. 13.

[3] The language of our Second Article is justified, no doubt, by the fact that reconciliation is necessarily a *mutual* relation between offender and offended, and that our persistent impenitence, barring from *our* side the flow of Divine Love, forces, as it were, into the attitude of an adversary, Him Who is always "waiting to be gracious." Hence the bold language of the earlier revelation in such passages as Lev. xxvi. 14, *sqq*.

[4] 2 Cor. v. 18–20.

trespasses, it was not because He, the Unchanging, had altered His view of sin; but because the love of the Blessed Trinity had devised means whereby to alter essentially the relation of mankind towards sin, and therefore towards holiness.

The word *Propitiation* seems more germane still to our subject. It suggests inevitably the appeasing of wrath, and reminds us of the many places in the Old Testament and the New Testament alike, where the "wrath of God" is mentioned; it reminds us too of that terrible phrase in the Revelation, "the wrath of the Lamb."[1]

That this "propitiation" must not be taken crudely, as though it meant the appeasing of the passion of "one who is angry with a personal feeling" against the offender, is ably shown by Bishop Westcott.[2] He points out the difference in usage of ἱλασμός

[1] Rev. vi. 16. [2] Commentary on 1 John, pp. 85–87.

and the cognate words in pagan writers and in the Bible, wherein the very grammatical constructions used are full of contrast. To the pagan writers "propitiation" means an altering of the feeling of the angry person; to the inspired writers it speaks of the removal of the cause of alienation, of the obstacle to communion.

There is much in the great mystery that is too deep for our sin-beclouded minds to penetrate; but of this we may be sure—that it implies that God, being utter holiness, cannot, of His very nature, welcome the impenitent and sinful, or treat sin as though it were not sin. Those, then, who ignore the obstacles to our access to God—the *raison d'être* of the Sin-offering, reject the teaching of the New Testament.

LEVITICAL TEACHING AND MODERN DIFFICULTIES

Modern misunderstanding of the doctrine due largely to failure to appreciate the Old Testament—Even crudest ideas of sacrifice have much to teach, Levitical sacrifices vastly more—Profound teaching of Leviticus about sin and holiness reflected in pagan rites all over the world.

THE revolt of modern thought against this aspect of the Atonement is based partly on a just abhorrence of partial and perverted teaching about it that comes from a misunderstanding of Bible teaching; the spectacle of an angry Father appeased by punishing an innocent Son—forgetful alike of the willingness of the Sufferer and the love which actuated Father and Son alike; or the immoral fiction by which one man's acts and character are imputed to another—

forgetful of the representative character of the Incarnate God, and of our incorporation in Him. Here, in holiest place of all, the most grievous mistakes have indeed been made, especially where the operation of the sacraments as incorporating us in Christ, and identifying us with Him, has been largely ignored—till now, among some of the most enlightened of the Protestant sects, a revulsion of feeling has stripped the Atonement of all its sacrificial meaning.

In part, also, the revolt is due to an utter failure to appreciate the Old Testament, and to realize the Divine character of its progressive revelation.

"What has Christianity to do with sacrifice?" they say. "It is a method of religious observance which the civilized world has happily outgrown. Can those who reverence its associations ever have pictured to themselves the revolting horror and squalor of

the actual thing? The public slaughter of a poor dumb beast—the flowing blood, the reeking altar?"

Yes, we may say; but what of a crucifixion? Were not the same revolting details to be seen there, and vastly intensified by the fact that the victim was a man?

Or, again, they say, "Think what a crude and anthropomorphic view of God the practice of universal sacrifice evinced. The primitive idea of sacrifice, which has left, says a recent writer,[1] a thousand traces in the Bible, was this—that God was nourished like a man, that He needed food; and sacrifice was originally an offering of food to Him. Later on, by a sort of relative spiritualization, men came to think that God fed upon the smell of roasting victims, and that such smell was agreeable to Him.[2]

[1] Sabatier, *Expiation*, pp. 10, 11.
[2] As in Gen. viii. 21, and elsewhere.

And what, they may ask, have such ideas to do with Christ's martyrdom? How do they affect our welfare, temporal or eternal?"

And in answer we should simply give praise to the condescension of the patient love of God, who from such small and strange and crude beginnings evolved so intensely wonderful and true a conception of sacrifice as we find in the Epistle to the Hebrews—the flower that has grown from so unsightly and unpromising a root!

Was it indeed so as they say? Does the anthropomorphic language of the Old Testament carry us back to such childish ideas—that God actually fed upon the fat or upon the fumes? If it be so, we may be bold to say that those who in good faith offered such sacrifice to Him offered, indeed, an acceptable oblation, and were, in all their childlike ignorance, practically nearer to the

truth than the most enlightened unbeliever of to-day.

But be that as it may, the Levitical sin-offering[1] has far more in it than a mere desire to nourish or gratify the Deity. It is full of the most solemn associations of confession and penitence;[2] it is full of the profoundest teaching about the unapproachable holiness of God, Who yet in mercy deviseth means whereby His banished may find access to Him.

Leviticus and its sin-offering have a message to our age which it cannot afford to ignore. SIN and HOLINESS—that utterly inconceivable conjunction! How little we realize, except before the cross, what the holiness of God really means—how utterly impossible it is that He should welcome

[1] For sin and guilt-offerings, see esp. Lev. iv. 1–vi. 7, and vi. 24–vii. 7; also chap. xvi. for the national sin-offering on the Day of Atonement.

[2] See below, p. 96.

the uncleansed sinner, though He love him never so dearly! Sin is more than a bondage, a disease, a state of rebellion, transgression of external law; it is an insult to the holiness of the Most High, it is a contradiction of the very nature of God.

Man has about him that which God's eyes are too pure to look upon; it must be put away, got rid of, remitted, before the eyes of God's life-giving face can be turned upon the sinner.

So man, even outside the covenant, dimly felt the alienation, the sense of wrath upon him, and flew to wildest lengths of attempted expiation all over the world. You find it among the Greeks and Romans, among the Semite neighbours of Israel, among the Indians of Mexico and Peru,—all lengths they went in their frantic terror, even to human sacrifice. And their terror was well-grounded.

The "wrath of God," the sin-ward aspect of His holiness, the devouring fire of outraged love, is indeed "revealed against sin,"[1] and in our heart of hearts we know it must be so.

[1] Cf. Rom. i. 18.

THE PASSION REFLECTS THE DIFFICULTY OF FORGIVENESS

Why could not God do away sin with a mere *fiat?*—The depths of the Passion: Gethsemane and the cry from the Cross—Mistaken interpretations.

But why could not God simply do away sin by a "fiat"? Why could He not, in His great mercy, remit it without the terrors of Gethsemane and Calvary? He bids us simply forgive . . .[1] Yes, but we must remember the difference between an offence against God and an offence against a fellow-sinner. We may forgive our brother what he has done against us; but when he injured us he also sinned against God—and *we* cannot forgive that—we cannot put him

[1] Matt. vi. 14, 15; xviii. 35.

again into the right relation to the universe of righteousness, and see that truth and goodness are vindicated.

Is there not enough in the story of the Passion to convince us that Christ did, in some mysterious way, bear the burden of our sin; that He, the Sinless, did so identify Himself with sinful humanity as to feel the horror of it, to touch the lowest depths of the pit of woe that it opens up—to experience, in feeling at least, the terrible alienation from the Father that is of the essence of its doom: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"[1]

It was these words, together with the agony of Gethsemane, that led the Protestant scholastics of the seventeenth century to their extreme development of St. Thomas's doctrine of *penal satisfaction*, in which they spoke of the Saviour as having endured the

[1] Matt. xxvii. 46.

torments of hell, and the malediction of the Father.[1]

We dare not commit such an outrage upon conscience and reason. We fear even as we go so far—we shudder as we repeat the "cry of forsakenness" from the lips of One in unbroken fellowship with the Father, Himself very God as well as perfect, sinless Man.

[1] Cf. Sabatier, *Expiation*, pp. 66, 67.

CHRIST WON FOR THE WORLD THE GRACE OF PENITENCE

The Cross supplies (1) the *motive* of penitence, in fear and love; (2) the *grace* of penitence, by our sacramental union with the Crucified.

BUT in one point at least we are safe. We may echo the beautiful words of St. Clement of Rome—some of the earliest and finest words on the Atonement outside the New Testament—and say we believe that the Blood of Christ our Sin-offering, "shed for our salvation," won "the grace of penitence for all the world."[1]

It was penitence, the penitence of the offerer, that was, after all, the heart and soul

[1] I. vii., Παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ἐπήνεγκεν. See Moberly, p. 326.

of the sin-offering. He confessed his sins in detail to the priest, as he laid his hand upon the victim that was to represent his forfeited life.[1] In Christ Offerer and Victim are one. In Him, the Sinless, humanity offered the oblation of perfect penitence. "God was in Christ," writes St. Paul, "reconciling the world to Himself."[2] May we not add, man was in Christ, suffering voluntarily, whole-heartedly, the penalty pronounced on sin; winning, through suffering, its way to a new relation to the holiness of God, and so gaining access once more? Christ the Sinless, and mankind in Him, offered to the Father an offering of perfect penitence, an offering that had never been rendered before; for sin itself had marred the capacity for penitence, which is God's

[1] The traditional form of confession, which closely resembles that of Achan (Josh. vii. 20), is given in Willis's *Worship of the Old Covenant*, ch. vii., pp. 141, 142.

[2] 2 Cor. v. 19.

view of sin. He embraced—not simply endured—the sufferings that our sin laid upon Him. He put humanity once more into harmony, into union, with the Divine mind about sin; "O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing that is evil."[1] He provided, in the Gift of Pentecost, a transforming Power within man's very personality, a continual abiding of His own holiness.

The cross supplies at once the *motive* and the *spring* of penitence.

(1) The *motive:* through *fear* and *love.*

Through fear, because it exhibits to us in its horrors the Divine detestation of sin, and makes it impossible in the sight of the crucifix ever to think lightly of sin; through love, by the spectacle of One who, being "lifted up," draws "all men unto Him."[2] By dying, says Abelard, He showed us the

[1] Ps. xcvii. (P.B.V.). [2] John xii. 32.

extent of His love, "*Moriendo quidem docuit quantum nos dilexerit*,"[1] and suffering love has an appeal more forcible even than that of fear—an appeal to call forth answering love and corresponding suffering.

But it needs more than an object-lesson and an appeal to "win for the world the grace of penitence." The cross is not only the motive, but the *spring* of penitence. Christ brings not only the *truth* about sin, but the *grace* to turn from it. We have seen how in Him all humanity is found contrite; but what He did for all, He does in each. The blood of the sin-offering is constantly explained as an instrument of cleansing, of purification. So Christ's life—set free for application to each soul by His victorious death—becomes to us a principle of purification and new life. It is our absolution; it is also the spring and

[1] *Theol. Christ.*, iv. 13; ap. Sabatier, p. 59.

fountain of our contrition. Christ in us is the penitent; Christ in us by His Spirit shows us our sins, puts them in contrast with God's holy will—draws us to confession, sprinkles us mystically with His Blood in absolution.

CHRIST OUR PEACE-OFFERING

Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν. Eph. ii. 14.
Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι· ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ Χριστός. Gal. ii. 20.

I. *Importance of this Aspect of the Atonement. Résumé* of the argument: The peace-offering only a single aspect of the Atonement—Yet important, especially in connexion with the application of the One Sacrifice to individual souls.

II. *The Cross and Forgiveness of Sins.* The *fact* of the connexion between the Cross and forgiveness generally admitted—Disagreement as to the *nature* of the connexion—Forgiveness, separated from Crucifixion in the Creed, placed in the third section—So the practical effect of Christ's sacrifice is found in the sacramental sphere of the Holy Spirit and the Church.

III. *New Testament Teaching and Modern Difficulties.* The New Testament teaching on this subject

suggests an answer to the problems raised by the doctrines of *vicarious satisfaction* and *imputation.*

IV. *The Holy Spirit and the Life of Communion.* Growth of Christ within us, the work of the Holy Ghost —Progressive character of the life of communion, focussed in the Holy Eucharist, the peace-offering of the New Covenant—The outward is also inward, because Christ is in us and we in Him.

V. *Conclusion.*

CHRIST OUR PEACE-OFFERING

IMPORTANCE OF THIS ASPECT OF THE ATONEMENT

Résumé of the argument : The peace-offering only a single aspect of the Atonement—Yet important, especially in connexion with the application of the One Sacrifice to individual souls.

We have thought, so far, of our Lord's atoning sacrifice under three different figures—first, generally, as a work of *redemption and rescue*, foreshadowed by that great deliverance of the Hebrew people ; the mighty display of saving power to which they constantly looked back as the pledge that Jehovah was for evermore their Saviour ; the ransom from bondage and

death memorialized down the ages in that sacrificial feast, amid the associations of which our Lord willed to consummate His self-offering. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus: because it is He that shall save His people from their sins."[1]

The Passover, gathering up under the shadow of a great historical deliverance thoughts belonging to each of the great groups of Levitical sacrifices, provided us with a fitting introduction to the whole subject. And its symbolism, so high and wide and deep, carried us into the atmosphere of the first great age of Christian thought, the age of the Apostolic and ante-Nicene Fathers, of which Athanasius stands out as the brightest star. Christ our Deliverer from the bondage of sin and death—Christ who brings life and immortality to light. *Christus, Salvator mundi.*

[1] Matt. i. 21.

Next, we thought of it under the figure of the *burnt-offering*. Christ, the Second Adam, the representative Man, gathering up the whole human race into the offering of loyallest obedience; rendering to the great Suzerain of the universe, in Anselm's feudal language, that unstinted homage which is the sole, but also the necessary, claim that the Creator lays upon His rational subjects, angels and men; rendering also by the offering up of a life on which, because it was sinless, death had no claim, whatever of satisfaction the infinite outrage of sin demanded.

We thought of Him as performing sacramentally in each of us what He wrought once for all our race—inspiring us, by His Holy Spirit, with the "spirit of discipline," so that we too, in Him, may come to realize the life of God's true liegemen—*cui servire regnare est*[1]—so that in the strength of our

[1] Second Collect at Morning Prayer.

incorporation in Him we may dare to offer up to the Father "ourselves, our souls and bodies, a reasonable holy and lively sacrifice."

Thirdly, we touched upon some of the inner thoughts of the *sin-offering*. We thought how the death itself of Christ is set forth in Scripture as having a unique and as it were supreme position in the great life-long offering of His sinless service. We thought how that death has always been closely linked, by Christian thought in all ages as by the New Testament itself, with the remission of sins; and how many clear references there are to it in the New Testament which unmistakeably connect it as antitype with the sin-offering. We found ourselves here in the atmosphere of the later Schoolmen, Catholic and Protestant, and in the region where the most disastrous mistakes have been made: the characteristic Thomist doctrine of "*satisfaction*," grounded on truth,

having been developed more rigidly and artificially, and to greater extremities, until the "agony" and the "cry upon the cross" became the text of teachings hardly distinguishable from blasphemy.

We hurried back into the serene air of the sub-Apostolic age and listened to St. Clement of Rome, as he proclaimed how the precious blood of Christ had "won for all the world the grace of penitence." We saw in penitence the very inmost spirit of the Old Testament Sin-offering. We saw in Christ the sinless penitent, mankind for the first time restored to the possibility of contrition and therefore of holiness : the sinner inconceivably inspired with the Divine view of sin.

We thought of the cross as being at once the motive and the source of penitence in each of Christ's members—in ourselves. The motive, by fear and love; *fear* of the

wrath of God against sin—wrath of the Father, wrath of the suffering Lamb—unmistakeably there displayed; fear and horror and loathing of our insidious foe who on Calvary alone shows himself in his true light—*love*, the response of the heart to Love, bleeding for us sinners.

We thought of the cross—the great sin-offering—as the actual source of the grace of penitence in us as we, in Christ—incorporate in Him by the Holy Ghost—are sprinkled with, and also drink into our souls, the purifying, life-renewing stream of His precious Blood; and we prayed that we, dwelling in Him and He in us, might have our sinful bodies and souls washed and cleansed by His sacramental gift.

Burnt-offering, Sin-offering, and now the Peace-offering.

We must remember that the Atonement more than fulfils these inspired types of

itself, and that the revelation which of old was given in fragments — πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως[1]—becomes one in Christ. The several aspects can only be isolated artificially, for purposes of study. In reality they all run into one another, and none can be completely understood without the rest.

Of the *peace-offering*,[2] this is perhaps especially true. The type is fairly distinct. It has little or nothing to do with the cleansing away of guilt—that obstacle that bars the approach of man to God. All that has been cleared away by the sin-offering, with its ritual of cleansing blood. The peace-offering symbolizes happy, peaceful communion with God: man feasting at His table, and sharing, as it were, His Divine and holy life.

Now in the antitype this aspect is indeed present, and is in some ways perhaps the

[1] Heb. i. 1. [2] See esp. Lev. iii. and vii. 11, *sqq.*

most important of all. But it is closely and intimately bound up with the other two, especially with the sin-offering, and it would be difficult, if it were justifiable, to treat them quite separately.

We said that this aspect of the Atonement is of very great importance. And the reason is, as we shall see, that it largely solves the problem which has puzzled so many minds: "What has an historical, objective act, like Christ's atoning death, to do with me to-day? how are its effects to be applied to me individually?"

THE CROSS AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS

The *fact* of the connexion between the Cross and forgiveness generally admitted—Disagreement as to the *nature* of the connexion—Forgiveness, separated from Crucifixion in the Creed, placed in the third section—So the practical effect of Christ's sacrifice is found in the sacramental sphere of the Holy Spirit and the Church.

ALL schools of thought, says a recent French writer,[1] in all ages, have been agreed upon the fact of the close and necessary connexion between the *pardon of sins* and *the death of Christ*. The controversy which has raged through so many Christian centuries, has been as to the *exact nature* of that connexion.

A curious thing has been noticed: that in spite of the way in which this linking of the death and the forgiveness has been

[1] Sabatier, *Expiation*, p. 1.

present from the first to the consciousness of Christendom, the two are not conjoined in the Creed. The recital of the death of Christ in the Creed is followed, not only by its immediate and necessary sequel, the recital of the Resurrection and Ascension, but also by that of His Second Advent as our Judge.

The forgiveness of sins is separated from the death by eight or nine clauses. Why is this? There may be several reasons, but one at least lies, surely, in the fact that the forgiveness of sins, won for us, as it was, by that self-offering of our Divine Representative which reached its climax on Calvary, belongs properly to the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. It finds its natural place in the sacramental sphere of the Holy Catholic Church.

Perhaps the chief contribution of that most suggestive treatise of Dr. Moberly, to

which we have so constantly referred, lies in the way he emphasizes the close and essential relation between the doctrine of the Atonement and that of the Holy Spirit. He shows quite clearly how certain mediæval and modern thinkers, who have written nobly on the theme, have failed just because they stopped short of this. How Abelard at the beginning of the twelfth century, and Dale and Macleod Campbell in the nineteenth—Abelard with his wonderful realization of the Cross as a sublime appeal of love evoking love—deep calling unto deep; Dale with his splendid championship of the inviolable claims of Divine Righteousness; Campbell with his forcible conception of the Crucified as the perfect Penitent, confessing the sins of all mankind;—how all these, like many another, failed just because they did not bring into their scheme of the Atonement the work of the Holy Spirit and His sacramental grace.

Pentecost it is that is the completion of Calvary: Pentecost, whereby the atoning Blood—"which is the life"[1]—of the God-man—crucified, risen, ascended in glory, offering and interceding ever in the Holy of Holies—flows ever in constant stream through the Body here below and all its members: cleansing, vivifying, building up; transforming from glory to glory, from strength to strength, till we all come to a perfect, a complete, full-grown man—each perfect, also, in his place and part—"unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."[2]

[1] Lev. xvii. 11, 14. [2] Eph. iv. 13.

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING AND MODERN DIFFICULTIES

The New Testament teaching on this subject suggests an answer to the problems raised by the doctrines of *vicarious satisfaction* and *imputation*.

THIS aspect of the Atonement—the great peace-offering, in which man shares in the fellowship and life of God—is represented by that third group of metaphors in the New Testament which speak of "an essential transformation within, and of, ourselves."[1] Christ our *Justification* (δικαίωσις), our *Righteousness*, *Sanctification* (ἁγιασμός), *Peace* (εἰρήνη), *Life* (ζωή); Christ, victorious righteousness within us—involving the *moral effect in* the individual soul that our

[1] Moberly, pp. 334, 335.

own age specially looks for in the Atonement.

The Atonement as our peace-offering provides indeed the solution of most of the difficulties that beset the modern mind, and make it impatient of Soteriology.

It meets the difficulty about *vicarious satisfaction:* for, as St. Thomas truly said, "The Head and members are, as it were, one mystical person, and therefore the satisfaction of Christ pertains to all the faithful, as to His members."[1] We are in Him. We are crucified, buried, risen, ascended with Him; we suffer with Him, a pledge that we shall share His glory.

It meets, again, the similar difficulty about *imputation.* The mercy of God, to whom all things are an eternal present, looks upon

[1] *Summa*, Pt. iii. q. 48, art. 2; "Caput et membrum sunt quasi una persona mystica, et ideo satisfactio Christi ad omnes fideles pertinet sicut ad sua membra."

us in the light of our life's promise, He regards us not as we are, but as we are becoming; so He treats us, so He loves us: "*Tales nos amat Deus quales futuri sumus, non quales sumus.*"[1]

If God is said to impute to us Christ's righteousness (and the phrase, be it observed, is not a scriptural one),[2] it is because His righteousness is indeed ours—because by our union with Him we are started along the line of development which must surely result in the perfect realization of His righteousness in us.

[1] St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, i. § 21.

[2] St. Paul tells us indeed that Christ is "to us righteousness and sanctification" (1 Cor. i. 30), and that we may become "the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21); but he does not directly speak of the *imputation* of Christ's righteousness to us. What he insists on is rather the fact that faith, which is the proper root of righteousness (cf. Jas. ii. 14–18), is reckoned by God as the actual righteousness which it is its nature to produce. If we are "found having" this righteousness, it is emphatically because we are "found in Him" Phil. iii. 9).

THE HOLY SPIRIT
AND THE LIFE OF COMMUNION

Growth of Christ within us, the work of the Holy Ghost—Progressive character of the life of communion, focussed in the Holy Eucharist, the peace-offering of the New Covenant—The outward is also inward, because Christ is in us and we in Him.

It is the Holy Spirit's office in us to tend that growth of Christ within, that shall in due time absorb our whole being, so that in the end, by His great mercy, as our very personality has become transformed, transfigured by the Lord the Spirit,[1] we shall indeed be like Him—shall wake up after His likeness, and be satisfied with it.[2] Baptism, Confirmation, first Communion, Ordination itself, so far as it affects the individual ordained — all these are but

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 18. [2] Ps. xvii. 15.

conspicuous moments in an incessant activity of the Pentecostal Representative of Christ within us, leading us gently on through the joys and sorrows of the Christ-life, crucifying us to sin, burying us from the world, raising us ever to newer and higher life, taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us, leading us on step by step into all truth[1]—truth of character as well as of intellect—a truer relation to the All-holy, and to His gracious will for us: a truth that at last shall make us utterly free —free for His perfect service—free to join with the sinless angels in their unhampered fulfilment of His will.

But that rite which most emphatically represents the peace-offering, is, of course, the Holy Communion. In it we are not only guests at God's Table, but feed upon the glorified life of the Son of man.

[1] John xvi. 13, 14.

This is not only His own appointed memorial of His atoning death—so that in it we "show His death until He come,"[1] and plead before the Father His precious blood, uniting our pleading with His own perpetual presentation of the sacrifice in the heavenly temple—not only is it the memorial of His atoning death, but it is also the normal instrument of our union with Him, by virtue of which we dwell in Him and He in us. "In Christ" (ἐν Χρίστῳ). Forty or fifty times St. Paul uses that most significant phrase; and in it, after all, lies the essential truth of sacramentalism, the rationale of the practical effect of the Atonement. All is done in Him. His work is objective, historical; no mere beautiful figment of our imagination. It is a fact, at first independent and outside of ourselves: at first outside, but then also within. For

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 26.

all that He did and suffered, we do and suffer in Him. The death He died is really ours; the offering He offered, the victory He won, is really ours[1]—if only we abide in Him, loyal, faithful, responsive, self-devoting.

Therefore we plead, in spirit at least, at every Eucharist—

"Only look on us as found in Him."

[1] Rom. vi. 3–11; Gal. ii. 20; Col. ii. 12, etc.

CONCLUSION

Our considerations have been wide in their embrace—from the first crude beginnings of savage ritual, that witness to man's universal need of communion with a Higher Power and his half-realized sense of alienation, on through the inspired and deeply educative ceremonial of the Old Testament; and then from that shadow to the substance —from the promise in the Law to the fulfilment in the gospel. We have learnt something of the inexhaustible riches of the teaching of the New Testament about our Saviour's life and death and victory through death, and the way in which He communicates these mysteries to each of us,

so that they become our very own. And we have passed on from the New Testament itself through the Christian ages, from the Apostolic Fathers to our own time, and have seen how now one and now another aspect of this many-sided mystery emerges into prominence. In the course of our survey we have touched upon the chief difficulties which the doctrine of the Atonement raises in modern minds, and have found that their solution lies in a more careful attention to the mind of Scripture, and the sacramental teaching of the Church.

But what we have chiefly learnt is surely this: how much there is to learn; how hopelessly incompetent is the mind of man to fathom the depths—to grasp the fulness—of a mystery so appalling, deep, and vast.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher

than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."[1]

But, thanks be to God, it is not the understanding of the doctrine of the Atonement that saves us—much and earnestly as we should strive to understand it. It is the Atonement itself that saves us, not any theory of the manner of it: the atoning love of Christ received in faith, with humility and contrition, and bringing forth in us the fruits of holiness in union with Him.

"For thus saith the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, Whose Name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."[2]

[1] Isa. lv. 8, 9. [2] Isa. lvii. 15.

INDEX OF SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

PAGE

Gen. viii. 21 87
Exod. iii. 7, 8 43
,, xii. 7, 10, 13, 14, 27, 42 37
,, xii. 8, 14 38
,, xii. 11 39
,, xii. 12, 13, 23, 27 39
,, xiii. 11–16 37
Lev. i. 3, *sqq.* 56
,, iii. 109
,, iv. 1–vi. 7 89
,, vi. 8, *sqq.* 56
,, vi. 24–vii. 7 89
,, vii. 11, *sqq.* 109
,, xvi. 89
,, xvii. 11, 14 ..... 48, 114
,, xxvi. 14, *sqq.* 82
1 Sam. xv. 22 58
Ps. xvii. 15 (16) 118
,, xl. 6–8 62
,, xcvii. 10 97
Cant. viii. 6 12
Isa. liii. 60
,, lv. 8, 9 124
,, lvii. 15 124

PAGE

Hosea vi. 6 58
Micah vi. 8 59
Matt. i. 21 ..... 43, 104
,, ix. 13 58
,, xviii. 24 52
,, xx. 28 ..... 9, 18
,, xxvi. 26–28 ..... 17, 36
,, xxvi. 28 79
,, xxvi. 41 66
,, xxvi. 63, 64 66
Mark x. 45 ..... 9, 18
,, xiv. 22–24 17
,, xiv. 24 79
Luke ii. 49 68
,, ix. 23 67
,, xii. 50 77
,, xxii. 17–20 17
,, xxiv. 26, 27 18
John i. 9 ..... 30, 57
,, i. 29 60
,, i. 36 78
,, ii. 25 42
,, iii. 16 11
,, iii. 17 12

PAGE

John iv. 34 .....10, 61, 68
,, vi. 38 10
,, viii. 19 11
,, viii. 29 10
,, viii. 34 42
,, viii. 36 43
,, x. 17 11
,, x. 18 10
,, x. 30 11
,, xii. 24 78
,, xii. 32 .....78, 98
,, xii. 45 11
,, xiv. 7–11 11
,, xvi. 13, 14 119
,, xix. 28 66
,, xix. 30 68
Acts v. 29 64
Rom. iii. 24 18
,, iii. 25 .....19, 81
,, iv. 9, *sqq.* 117
,, v. 6–11 12
,, v. 9 13
,, v. 10 19
,, v. 19 .....45, 60
,, vi. 3–11 121
,, vii. 13 49
,, vii. 24 42
,, viii. 37–39 11
,, xi. 33 1
1 Cor. i. 30 .....19, 117
,, v. 7 .....23, 36
,, v. 8 43
,, xi. 26 120
,, xv. 57 42
2 Cor. iii. 18 118
,, v. 17 42

PAGE

2 Cor. v. 18–21 .....81, 82
,, v. 19 96
,, v. 21 .....82, 117
Gal. ii. 20...11, 19, 60, 100, 121
,, iii. 13 82
,, iii. 16, *sqq.* 117
Eph. ii. 14 .....19, 100
,, iv. 13 114
Phil. ii. 8 .....54, 73
,, iii. 9 117
Col. i. 13 19
,, ii. 12 121
1 Tim. i. 15 9
2 Tim. ii. 26 19
Heb. i. 1 109
,, ii. 17 81
,, iv. 15 68
,, v. 8 64
,, ix. 23–26 17
,, ix. 28 82
,, x. 5, *sqq.* 62
,, x. 12 17
1 Pet. ii. 21 68
,, ii. 24 82
,, iii. 18 82
2 Pet. i. 4 32
1 John i. 2 19
,, ii. 2 81
,, iii. 4, 5 55
,, iii. 16 11
,, iv. 9 12
,, iv. 10 12
,, iv. 11 12
,, v. 1. 12
Rev. vi. 16 83

REFERENCES TO AUTHORS

PAGE

Abelard.....5, 98, 113
Ambrose, St. 34
Anselm, St.....21, 48, 51–54
Apostolic Fathers.....26, 123
Arnold, Thos.....xiii.
Athanasius, St. ...27–32, 37, 48
Augustine, St. 34, 117
Bernard, St..... 74
Book of Common Prayer... 14, 60, 69, 79, 82, 105
Campbell, Macleod.....xiii., 113
Clement, St. (Rom.) 26, 95
Dale, R. W.....113
Dante.....44, 75, 76
Ellicott, Dr. .....viii.
Euripides..... 61
Gregory, St. (Gt.) 34

PAGE

Gregory, St. (Naz.)..... 34
Irenæus, St. 34
Jukes, Andrew..... 20
Leo, St..... 34
Livy 61
Maurice, F. D. .....xiii.
Moberly, R. C.....xiv., 18, 26, 27–33, 77, 81, 95, 115
Origen 34
Robertson, F. .....xiii.
Sabatier, Auguste...xii., 34, 75, 87, 94, 98, 111
Scholastics.....21, 50, 93, 106
Thompson, Dr. (Bp. Glos.) viii.
Westcott, Bp. 81, 83
Willis, A. F. 20, 96

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Ragg, Lonsdale,
Aspects of the atonement; th
e atoning sacrifice illustra
ted from the various s